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## EDITORIAL NOTES.

GEORGE HERBERT LOCKE.

AT the Chicago meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the N. E. A. last year, Professor Hanus of Harvard read a paper on "Obstacles to Educational Progress," in which he pointed out the great waste that is continually going on because the efforts toward educational betterment are so sporadic and fugitive. We all are workers, but not always intelligent workers; we are achieving results, but too often these results are not scientific, and therefore are not distinctly helpful to those who are looking for light and aid. Again, our ignorance of what is being done, of contemporary educational practice, is a serious handicap as our sources of information seem decidedly inadequate. We depend upon educational periodicals or conventions for knowledge of the methods by which our neighbor engaged in practically the same work is endeavoring to solve the same great questions. In the periodicals we too often find theories more or less fanciful and practices divorced from their social surroundings. It is but seldom that an editor receives as interesting, comprehensive, suggestive, and withal simple statement as that of Miss Johnson of her experience in teaching English in a mining region,<sup>1</sup> and yet such descriptions are infinitely more suggestive than all the theories of the educational evangelist who desires to see his name in print. In conventions we are treated to even poorer things than appear in periodicals, for the spoken word is naturally more diffuse and emotional. It is this desire to know what is being done that leads so many men to avoid the general meetings of a convention and to spend their time more profitably by interviewing in the hotel lobbies men whom they know to be *doers*, and learning from them that which will be suggestive and stimulating. From reports of various kinds we glean certain scraps of information as to contemporary educational practice, but the concomitant circumstances, the social setting, the reasons and results seldom or never accompany the information to explain its significance.

True, the three great reports of the Committees of Ten, of Fifteen, and on College Entrance Requirements have given us much help, but, after all, these are to a great extent isolated documents, which, though valuable in themselves, do not exercise the unifying influence upon education that is so necessary that legitimate progress may be made. Those of us who have made the most careful study of these documents and are most appreciative

<sup>1</sup>SCHOOL REVIEW, Vol. X, pp. 666-74.

of the benefits received from the work of these committees are the very ones who feel the need of some report that will afford us more accurate knowledge of what is being done, that will critically examine these practices, and from this examination, reinforced by suggestions from those who are honestly trying to improve these practices, will formulate some general principles of education that will serve as a guide and stimulus to intelligent co-operative experimentation. The address of Mr. Hanus voiced the sentiments of so many thinking men that the department acted at once and nominated a committee of nine, since increased to eleven, "to formulate contemporary educational doctrine, submit statements covering contemporary educational experience, and indicate the tendency of contemporary educational method." This committee met recently in Washington to consider the object of the inquiry, the best methods to be pursued, and to map out the plan of campaign. The discussion soon made evident the fact that there was a stupendous task ahead, but one which was alluring because of the immense possibilities and the eager desire of the thinking schoolmen for practical help. The ground to be covered was pretty thoroughly examined, the main divisions of the investigation considered, the method of investigation determined, and reports from each member submitted, so that, when the indorsement is given by the N. E. A. at its approaching meeting, no delay will be experienced in getting the work started. It cannot be accomplished in a year, possibly not in two years, because the desire was so manifest in the committee that the results of this investigation should be thorough, and should present a body of facts and of conclusions that will serve, not only to increase the knowledge of what is being done, but to stimulate all educational workers to such experimentation on a scientific basis that the resulting progress will be economic. The personnel of the committee is a guarantee that there will be a thorough sifting of evidence before verdicts are rendered.

YALE has at last thrown in her lot with the much-maligned advocates of the elective system, and in the meeting of the Corporation a few weeks ago made important changes. The subjects which are at present required for admission are English, ancient history, Latin, Greek, mathematics, and one modern language, namely, French or German. The new requirements, which go into effect in 1904, leave English, ancient history, and Latin unchanged, but will allow Greek to be wholly or in part superseded by an additional amount of mathematics or by a thorough knowledge of either French or German. The course of study in the freshman year is affected by this change, and the following arrangement has been made: The eight courses open to a freshman are to be: Greek, Latin, French, German, English, mathematics, chemistry, and history. Of these eight courses he will choose five, but under the restriction that three of his courses must be in continuation of three of the five studies (Greek, Latin, English, mathematics, or a modern language) already pursued

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OF THE ELECTIVE  
SYSTEM AT YALE

in a secondary school. By this restriction a connection between the work of the school and the college will be preserved, and every freshman will be required to continue the study of at least one of the three leading subjects—Greek, Latin, or mathematics—to which he gave the longest time in his school preparation.

The college curriculum at Yale may be described as follows: The unit of requirement is a course of study one hour a week through one year. The completion of sixty hours is required for the attainment of the degree of bachelor of arts—an amount which is claimed to be larger than is called for at other institutions similar to Yale. These sixty hours the student divides among the four years of his course. The courses of study are arranged in three grades—A, B, and C—which are naturally taken in successive years, as the A courses are elementary, the B courses more advanced; and the C courses involving generally some considerable amount of individual research. The students are subject to the same tripartite arrangement, and the classes are: (1) languages and literature; (2) mathematics and the natural and physical sciences; (3) philosophy, history, and the social sciences. Every student must complete before graduation two majors and three minors, and these must be so arranged that not more than two of these five units shall be in one of the above divisions of study. A major unit consists of connected courses of grades A, B, and C, aggregating at least seven hours a week; a minor unit consists of connected courses of A and B, aggregating at least five hours a week. This double provision aims, on the one hand, to encourage continuous work along some lines, and a certain degree of specialization along the line as evidenced by the individual research involved in these courses; on the other hand, it aims to encourage the students spreading their work over a variety of fields and thereby laying a broad foundation for their knowledge.

SPECIALLY appropriate is the term "conference" as applied to the meeting held some two months ago in Richmond, Va., when the interests of education in the South were discussed by men whose hearts are in the work, men of the North as well as of the South. *THE PROGRESS OF EDUCATION IN THE SOUTH* The address of the president, Mr. Robert C. Ogden, was an admirable presentation of the object of the conference, of its personnel, of its moral and patriotic inspiration, and of the fields of usefulness which it proposed to occupy, so that it might justify the assertion that it existed for the advancement and promotion of the education of all the people. He struck the keynote of hopefulness, and throughout the conference no one seemed out of tune. Dr. McIver's description of his efforts to advance education in North Carolina by means of educational conferences, a systematic popular campaign for local taxation, and the organization and work of the Woman's Association for the Betterment of Public Schoolhouses in North Carolina, showed that substantial progress was being made in that state. There are

now seventy-nine towns and cities and rural districts that have a local tax, elections are pending in forty-five other communities, and in nearly one hundred other communities the question is being agitated. Dr. Frissil, in describing conditions in Virginia, stated that of the 1,900,000 inhabitants about nine-tenths live in the country, and that there are over six thousand white schools in rural districts which if properly consolidated might be reduced to two thousand and no child need go farther than two and a half miles. A very interesting result of consolidation in the South is that with it comes the lengthening of the school year. A strong plea was made for trained teachers and more normal schools; for three or four modern, well-equipped, and well-maintained schools established at conspicuous rural centers; and for each county to have a competent superintendent giving all his time to the schools and receiving a salary commensurate with his work. Illustrations of the plan of campaign show that this work does not end in emotional platitudes. President Alderman told of the work of Professor Hines, of Louisiana State University, in the parish of Calcasieu during the past year. There is in this parish a population of 35,000 people, among whom thirty meetings were held and seventy addresses delivered. The result of this activity is that one ward has voted a special tax of three mills, and five others have voted the five-mill tax, amounting to a total of \$15,000. Professor Claxton, of Knoxville, Tenn., described the model country school which is to be established in Knox county. It will be a consolidated school, the house having six rooms for the accommodation of about 250 children and an assembly room for entertainments and other social gatherings. There will be twelve acres of land in connection with the school, a principal's house, an orchard, a vineyard, and a garden, all of which are to serve as suggestive to the inhabitants of the possibilities in architecture, agriculture, and horticulture. The course of study will be broad, and in addition to the three R's, elementary physics and chemistry, music, and domestic science will have places. It is likely that there will be at least six teachers, so that the work of this educational settlement may be properly done. Chancellor Kirkland touched a vital spot when he said: "The supreme need of the South is the improvement of the southern teacher. A consolidated school with a library and a good house is only dead matter until it is given life by the personality of a real teacher." This is being recognized throughout the southern country, and this summer the schools of inspiration, suggestion, and instruction, in connection with the various universities, will very materially help toward the development of an irresistible public opinion for the establishment and maintenance of a system of schools adequate for the needs of a free people so eloquently urged by President Alderman.

THIS is an era of expansion in the provision for secondary education for girls and boys. The American people believe that the public high school is a just charge upon the public treasury; that it is not a separate school for a

privileged class, but is the last four grades of the free public-school system, and to attend it is the privilege of all. We believe in equal opportunities for education, not in equal education; and in our enthusiastic belief in this part of our educational system we are erecting buildings out of the public funds that speak more eloquently than all the addresses that ever were made. Were we to be asked, What is the most prominent building in an American municipality, that in which the people take most pride? there would be no hesitation in answering: The school, and especially the high school. There is no better sign of the progress of this nation than that the interest of the people in erecting and being proud of the courthouse and jail has been transferred to the high school. The comfortable housing of the girls and boys has become a very interesting problem, and town vies with town in the desire to provide suitable accommodation so that the intellectual, moral, and physical training of those who are to be leaders should have the best material surroundings. The illustrations that have appeared from month to month in this journal are ample evidence, and these are but a very few—just enough to show the tendency. Feeling the importance of this problem, and recognizing that there are many of our readers who are contemplating the erection of new schools, we have devoted this number to the subject of architecture. The interest that was awakened as a result of the correspondence necessary to the carrying out of this design showed clearly what an interest there is in the work, what a pride there is in the possession of an adequate building, and what a great desire there is to make still greater progress. The development in the cities of New York and St. Louis is specially significant, and the articles on both these cities are authoritative.

THE September issue of this journal will be devoted to commercial education. The importance of this branch of the curriculum, its youth, its almost sad history, yet withal its necessity, render it an especially interesting subject to discuss. There will be illustrations of the new Commercial High School of New York city, and the relationship of commercial education to the other subjects of the curriculum will receive special attention.

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